

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, Sutton Subdivision

HAER No. WV-34

Stone Bridges 1 and 2

Bridge No. 1 - 1.73 miles east of Gassaway on B&O Line

Bridge No. 2 - 2.23 miles east of Gassaway on B&O Line

Gassaway and Sutton

Braxton County

West Virginia

HAER
WVA,
4-GAS,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HAER,
WVA,
4-GAS,
1-

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, Sutton Subdivision
Stone Bridges 1 and 2

HAER No. WV-34

Location: Bridge No. 1 - 1.73 miles east of Gassaway, West Virginia, along the B&O's Sutton Subdivision between Gassaway and Sutton, Braxton County, West Virginia

Bridge No. 2 - 2.23 miles east of Gassaway, West Virginia, along the B&O's Sutton Subdivision between Gassaway and Sutton, Braxton County, West Virginia

Date of Construction: 1909

Builder/Engineer: Coal and Coke Railway Company Engineering Department

Present Owner: The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company

Present Occupant: Kenton Meadows, Inc.

Present Use: Railroad bridges

Significance: Beginning in the 1880s, railroads played a major role in opening the interior of West Virginia for coal and timber exploitation, which in turn helped shift population centers and wealth to the State's central and southern counties. These two relatively rare stone bridges are located on a B&O branch line built in 1909 during the final phase of West Virginia railroad development. The line contributed to the development of Gassaway and Sutton, West Virginia.

Project Information: The project requiring mitigative documentation was the abandonment of a railroad line. The abandonment was approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission in Docket No. AB-19 (Sub-No. 10) and became effective on June 20, 1985. The bridges are expected to remain in place.

Report Prepared by: Lawrence H. Richmond
Assistant General Solicitor
Chessie System Railroads
100 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Edited and Transmitted by: Jean P. Yearby, HAER, 1987

PART I. DESCRIPTION OF THE BRIDGES

Bridge No. 1

Bridge No. 1 is a common masonry arch of S2 sandstone. It is 12 feet long and 31 feet, 9 inches wide. The bridge crosses a road. Bridge No. 1 was constructed in 1909 and no changes were made to the bridge after its construction.

Bridge No. 2

Bridge No. 2 is a common masonry arch of S2 sandstone. It is 24 feet long and 32 feet wide. The bridge crosses Little Buffalo Creek. Bridge No. 2 was constructed in 1909 and no changes were made to the bridge after its construction.

The two bridges are both of a common design, typical of B&O railroad construction of the early twentieth century.

The sites of both bridges were relatively clear when construction was completed in early 1910. Both bridge sites are now heavily overgrown with trees and brush. The bridge sites are essentially similar to the surrounding environment.

This information comes from B&O Engineering Department files and from an on-site inspection conducted to prepare this record.

PART II: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The two stone bridges are part of a line of railroad which in turn is part of the history of railroad development in West Virginia. During the 1870s, there was a national depression. This depression ended in West Virginia in the 1880s with a return to prosperity sparked by a number of events. These events included the increased demand for coal and timber in the East, the building of the Norfolk & Western railroad from Chesapeake Bay to the Ohio River, increased attention to coal traffic by the managements of The Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company (C&O) and the B&O (both of which already had lines in West Virginia), the development of new band saw mills, the development of new and more powerful locomotives, and an influx of new workers from the East, South, and Europe.

The development of timber and coal resources in West Virginia spurred more railroad development to tap the new business. The Ohio River Railroad was built from Wheeling to Huntington, the West Virginia & Pittsburgh Railroad, started in 1879), extended from Clarksburg to the timber resources in the

Monongahela, Elk and Gauley watersheds, and the Monongahela Railroad tapped the coal mines in the Clarksburg-Fairmont area. Henry Cassaway Davis, later a senator and leading West Virginia politician), and his son-in-law, Stephen E. Elkins, built the West Virginia Central Railroad along the State's eastern border between 1880 and 1900. Davis and Elkins were also active in the central interior, where they had a role in building the Coal and Coke Railway. Principal railroad building in West Virginia ended in 1910 with the completion of the Virginian Railway's line from Kanawha to Flat Top Mountain and the East. Railroad building played a major part in development of the interior of the State, which development shifted the centers of population and wealth away from the north and west edges toward the central and southern counties. The extension of the rail network also gave the State new geographic unity, and led to more urbanized settlements. The timber industry growth spurred by railroad development ultimately led to a change in the face of the land, with much of the virgin forest gone by 1920.

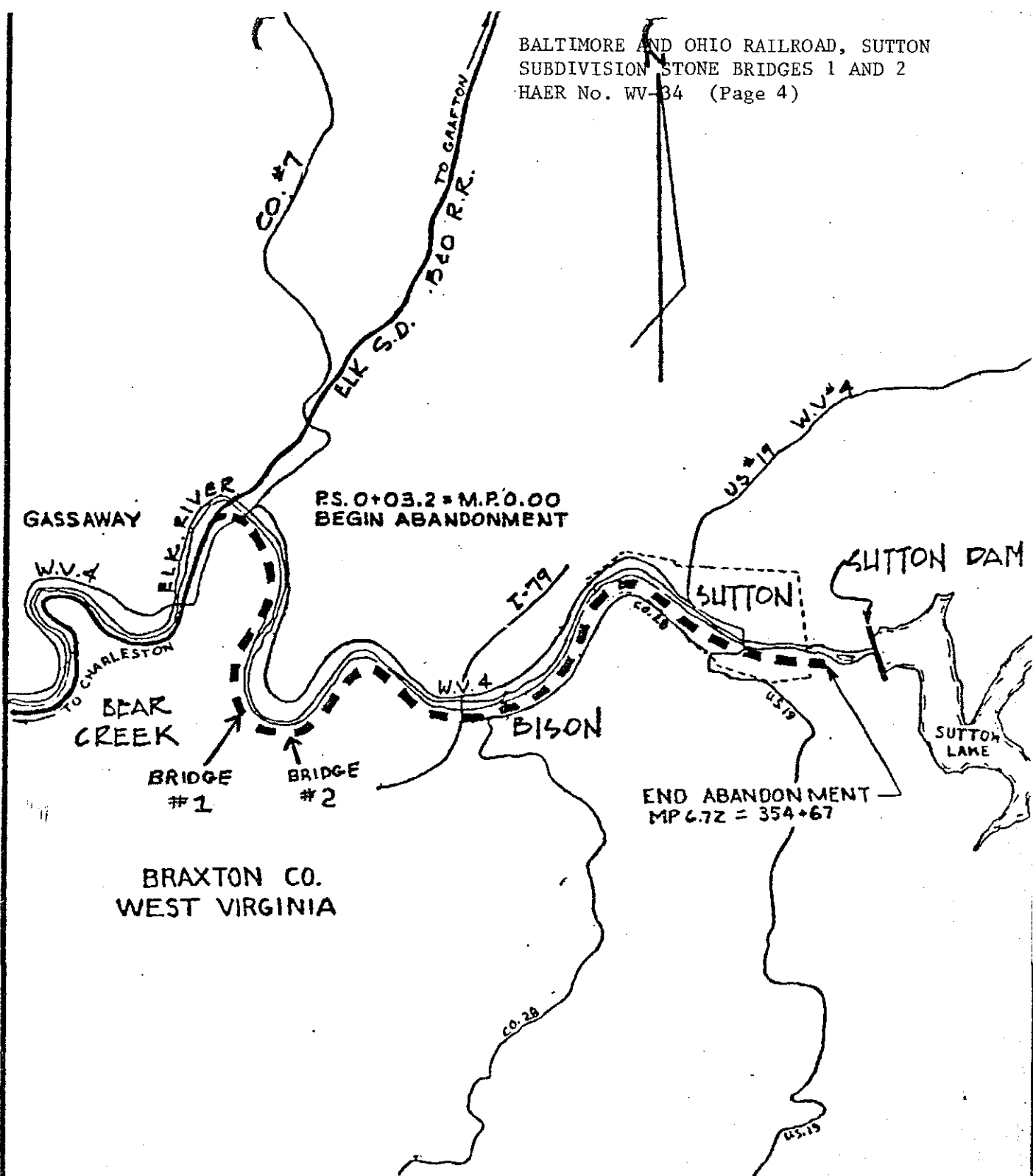
The branch on which the two stone bridges are located ran between Sutton and Gassaway, West Virginia. Sutton began in 1810 as a trading town for the surrounding farm land. Gassaway, named for Senator Henry Gassaway Davis, was founded in 1904 as a division point on the railroad between Elkins and Charleston. The Sutton to Gassaway branch right-of-way was originally owned by the Charleston, Glendennin & Sutton Railroad Company (CG&S), which was incorporated on May 12, 1891. On August 11, 1903, the CG&S sold its line of railroad and property to the Coal and Coke Railway Company, which had been incorporated as a wholly-owned B&O subsidiary in 1902. The branch was actually constructed between the spring of 1909 and January 1910, and it went into service on January 10, 1910. By 1918, the branch was handling six two-car passenger trains and one freight per day. By 1983, however, passenger traffic had long since disappeared, and freight traffic had declined to less than one car per week. B&O abandoned the line on June 20, 1985, and sold the right-of-way to Kenton Meadows Company, Inc.




III. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Jenkins, Jenks B. Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Corporate Histories,
Vol. 2. Baltimore: Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, 1922

William, John Alexander. West Virginia--A Bicentennial History
Nashville: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (1976), pp. 111-115

Writers Program of West Virginia. West Virginia--A Guide to the Mountain State. New York: Oxford University Press (1956), pp. 390, 406



<div>~ <u>LEGEND</u> ~</div> <div>B.&O. RAILROAD _____</div> <div>To BE ABANDONED   </div> <div>(6.72 MI)</div>	<div>REVISIONS</div> <div>10-17-72</div> <div>12-12-74</div> <div>4-1-84</div> <div>WV-110</div> <div>H-11152</div>	<div>THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD COMPANY</div> <div>ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT</div> <div>PROPOSED ABANDONMENT OF THE</div> <div>SUTTON SUBDIVISION</div> <div>GASSAWAY TO SUTTON</div> <div>MONONGAH DIVISION ~ SUTTON SUBDIVISION</div>		
	<div>SCALE: 1"=1mi</div> <div>DATE: 7-29-71</div> <div>DRAWN: CAB</div> <div>CHECKED:</div>	<div>VAL. SEC.</div> <div>V-65.2</div> <div>1 thru 4</div>	<div>DRAWING NO.</div> <div>X-20802</div>	

B.&O. RAILROAD —————
 TO BE ABANDONED (6.72 MI)